

# SWEDISH-AMERICAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

*Established to Record and Interpret the Swedish Presence in America*

Newsletter / September 2023

## “Honoring Our Past, Sustaining Our Future” 75th Anniversary Celebration Draws Near!

It is with great anticipation, following many months of planning, that the Society will gather for a two-day event marking its *semisesquicentennial*, or 75th Diamond

Anniversary. This is an important milestone for any organization and calls for a grand occasion to remember the past and look to the future, a time to savor and enjoy the moment together as a Society. Organized on October 15, 1948, an outgrowth of the successful Swedish Pioneer Centennial commemorating the beginning of the mass migration in the 1840s, the Swedish Pioneer Historical Society set a course to record and interpret the Swedish experience in North America through publications, programs, and preservation. Though the name changed in 1983 and growth has occurred in many forms, the Swedish-American Historical Society has remained unwaveringly faithful to its mission and its sustainability.

We have planned a festive dinner and program for Friday evening, October 20, at the Old Orchard Country Club in Mt. Prospect, Illinois. We gather at 5:30 for an hors d'oeuvres and open bar reception, enjoying the music of the Norwegian-Swedish folk duo

**lynx lynx**, and their mix of original and Nordic fiddle tunes. There will be recognitions and awards, a fine catered dinner, followed by board member and associate editor **Adam Hjorthén**'s keynote address on a topic very fitting for the occasion.

### Dining with Friends:

#### A History of Swedish-American Commemorations

On June 5, 1948, hundreds of Swedish Americans gathered for a festive banquet in the Grand Ballroom of the Palmer House in downtown Chicago. Enjoying a meal of broiled filet mignon, with “Illuminated Bombe Cardinale Suédoise” for dessert, the attendees celebrated the one hundredth anniversary of

the arrival of Swedish settlers to the Midwest. It was an invitation-only event in the month-long program of the Swedish Pioneer Centennial, an international celebration that laid the groundwork for what today is the Swedish-American Historical Society.

The nature of Swedish-American commemorations has changed across history. It has featured the erection of monuments and the staging of grand public festivals, but also smaller acts of commemoration whose significance is often overlooked – including that of luncheons and banquets. Commemorative dinners have been sites for the nurturing of friendships. Taking stock of the changes in memorial culture from the nineteenth century to today, this talk explores the sustained significance of such fleeting events.

Commemorations are always about remembering the past, for present purposes, with visions of the future. As the talk looks to the history of Swedish-American commemorations, it also speaks to the 75th



YOU'RE INVITED



SWEDISH-AMERICAN  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

*Honoring Our Past • Sustaining Our Future*

### 75th Anniversary Celebration



Friday, October 20–Saturday, October 21, 2023  
Chicago, Illinois



Adam Hjorthén

(continued on page 2)



*Anniversary theme, raising questions of what pasts that we honor, and what futures we envision.*

Please see the formal invitation to the right, which was recently mailed and posted online, for the evening’s location, schedule, program, and reservation information. We look forward to seeing you at the dinner celebration!

*We gather again the next afternoon from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m., October 21, for a reception and program in Brandel Library at North Park University, Chicago. The Society’s Swedish-American Archives of Greater Chicago has its home here and has put together an exhibit based on its rich archival collections and the ways they continue to serve the public in research and interpretation. There will be presentations by guest speakers and discussion with the audience. Thanks to archivist Andy Meyer for supervising the exhibit and, along with our preservation committee, for planning the arrangements.*

*This event is free and open to the public. There will be light refreshments, an opportunity to converse and take in the exhibit. It will also provide the Society with the occasion on its 75th anniversary to express gratitude to North Park University, which has not only been home to its archives since the mid-1960s but to its office, as well, since the mid-1950s.*

*Thank you for your support through the years, whether they are long or short as a member, and for being such a key part of why we are celebrating. You continue to make our mission possible—past, present, and future!*




Patrik Ahlberg and Vidar Skrede, of the group lynx lynx.



Old Orchard Country Club, Mt. Prospect, Illinois.

75  
years

SWEDISH-AMERICAN  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Honoring Our Past • Sustaining Our Future

75th Anniversary Celebration  
Friday, October 20, 2023

Old Orchard Country Club  
700 West Rand Road, Mt. Prospect, Illinois

5:30 p.m.  
Reception: Hors d'oeuvres and open bar  
with music by Patrik Ahlberg and Vidar Skrede  
of the group lynx lynx

6:45 p.m.  
Welcome, recognitions, and awards

7:15 p.m.  
Dinner  
Filet mignon & chicken, with salad, vegetables, potatoes, and dessert

8:30 p.m.  
Keynote address by Adam Hjorthén, Uppsala University,  
“Dining with Friends:  
A History of Swedish-American Commemorations”

REGISTRATION  
\$100 per person

To register and pay online, visit  
[www.SwedishAmericanHist.org](http://www.SwedishAmericanHist.org)

# The Member Survey Results Are In!

As we mark the 75th anniversary of our Society, the Board of Directors looks to our members to help guide our work these next 75 years. We set out to learn what you think with a member survey this past spring and are ready to share some results. We were pleased to receive 116 responses (34 percent of our members) and learn that members report high satisfaction with the Society. Of respondents to the member survey, 75 percent, for example, rate that they receive good or exceptional value from participating as a member and 93 percent say they would be somewhat likely or very likely to recommend becoming a member to other people. Members also reported that the three most important reasons for joining the Society are supporting the preservation of Swedish American history, having a research interest in Swedish-American history, and learning more about their ancestral and family history.

Member feedback indicates that our online programs, that we have offered since 2020, have already become, along with in-person events, the number-one way in which members engage with the Society. We are committed to continuing both online and in-person events! Join us in person this October in Chicago for our special 75th Anniversary weekend that will include not only a festive dinner and program (purchase tickets on the SAHS website) but also a more informal open house and reception at

the Society’s Archives at North Park University (a free event). We will soon announce the spring 2024 programs, which we promise to be a combination of in-person and online programs!

Members also shared that they appreciate our publications, both the journal and the newsletter. We are encouraged to know that our plans to make changes to both will be received with interest and that you are looking for us to continue offering high-quality and a variety of articles, news, and scholarship.

We thank you for your enthusiastic messages of support and recommendations for programs and for sharing tidbits about your regional Swedish organizations and the other Scandinavian-American journals you enjoy. The survey will most certainly inform decisions made going forward. In short, the board of directors will continue to engage with members as we remain dedicated to the mission of studying Swedish emigration and the history and culture of the Swedish experience in North America through research, publications, programs, and archives. We ask, in turn, that you recommend becoming a member to other people.



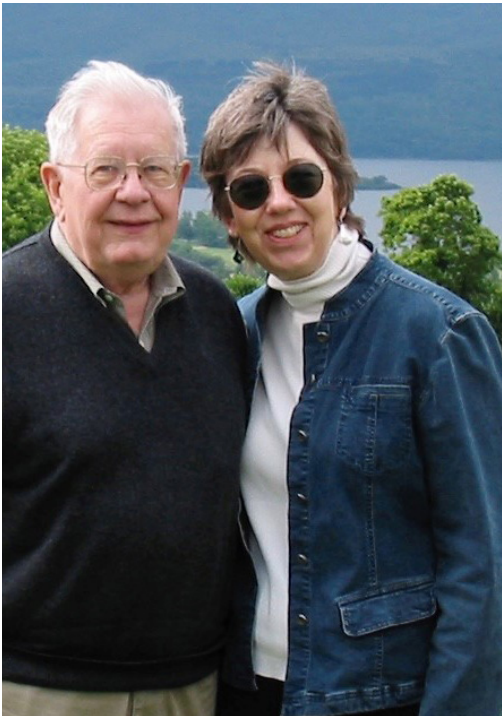
# Thank You, Grace!

After twenty-six years, **Grace Carlson Lund** is stepping down from her gifted design and layout work of the Society’s *Newsletter*. She began working with her husband, **Eric**, in producing the twice-yearly publication in 1997, and continued until his passing in January 2016. Grace’s vocational expertise in art, photography, graphic design, and computers, coupled with Eric’s decades of experience as a teacher of journalism and columnist and editor for the *Evanston Review* and the *Chicago Daily News*, meant that they were ideal collaborators. Grace has graciously (no pun intended!) continued over the years since to work with editor **Phil Anderson**, who is very grateful for her wise experience and friendship over many years. It has been a joy.

A new era begins in 2024 with an expanded newsletter under the leadership of a new editor and the creative design and production work of **Sandy Nelson**. Grace’s legacy of skilled visual communication to our members for more than a quarter-century is remembered and honored.

We also recognize Grace’s service as the “at-large member” of the executive committee for the past seven years.

*Many, many thanks, and all best wishes!*





## New Developments and Expansion in Society Publications

The Swedish-American Historical Society is pleased to announce that it has entered into an agreement with the University of Minnesota Press (UMP) to become part of its journals program, beginning in 2024. This is the culmination of conversation over the past eighteen months within the publications committee, and since the beginning of 2023 with UMP. At its spring meeting in April, the Society's board of directors approved the proposed change regarding the quarterly journal and authorized the committee to finalize details and the president to sign a "Memorandum of Agreement," which occurred on August 24.

After seventy-four years and 296 continuous issues, beginning in 1950, the *Swedish-American Historical Quarterly* (until 1982, the *Swedish Pioneer Historical Quarterly*) will become an annual publication with a new name—*Swedish-American Studies*. **Mark Safstrom** will continue as editor, along with **Adam Hjorthén** as associate and book review editor. The publications committee will continue its collaborative oversight with the editors and UMP. The journal will appear in the fall of each year. In addition to a new name, it will also have a different, attractive look as we work together with the creative design team at UMP.

There are several reasons for the change. Many journals in the field of immigration studies are annual publications, and there are certain economies of cost to the Society and workflow for the editors and ensures sustainability. We will no longer be responsible for copyediting, design, layout, printing, and mailing; this will all be handled by UMP. By publishing with a highly respected university press, there is enhanced visibility and advantages for younger scholars, in particular, who are more dependent on recognized refereed journals with digital access for grants, academic appointments, tenure, and promotion. The yearly content

and page-length of *Swedish-American Studies* will remain comparable to the *Quarterly*—articles and book reviews, with the possibility developing occasional thematic features. We anticipate more readers of our quality journal.

As part of the agreement, the Society will migrate its digitized back issues of the *Quarterly* to UMP and its participation in the online Project Muse program for academic journals.

This will not affect the benefits received by members. It will allow, however, for members to choose getting the journal in paper copy through the mail or digitally. We learned from our recent membership survey both the high appreciation of the journal as a regular, primary benefit and that there are those who will appreciate the choice of delivery. In addition, working with UMP means that it will solicit through advertising personal and institutional library subscriptions, from which the Society receives royalties. The incentive, of course, will be for new subscribers to become SAHS members. Moreover, Society members will receive a password that allows them to access back issues of the journal on Project Muse.

In addition to the annual publication of *Swedish-American Studies*, the Newsletter will also change with a new look and yet-to-be determined name. It will remain a spring and fall publication but will be significantly expanded with news of the Society and Swedish America, features and brief articles of interest to our broad readership, and visual appeal. Thus, with these changes to the journal and newsletter, publication benefits to members are not reduced in any way but expanded.

The *Swedish-American Historical Quarterly* has had a stellar run, and the Society looks forward eagerly to what comes next in its successor, *Swedish-American Studies*!



## Personal Reflections on the Journal and Its Significance

by Joy Lintelman

My relationship with the *Quarterly* began when the publication was thirty-one years old—in 1981—the year I began graduate studies. Having determined to focus my dissertation research on Swedish immigration, my advisor, Dr. Rudolph Vecoli, quickly directed me to the *Quarterly*. It has been a steady and reliable companion ever since. I still can recall spending hours sitting in the periodicals section of Wilson Library at the University of Minnesota, poring over bound volumes of the *Quarterly*. The journal's pages primed and prepared me as I entered the field, introducing me to the writings of Franklin D. Scott, Nils Hasselmo, Kristian Hvidt, Lars Ljungmark, Harald Runblom, and H. Arnold Barton, among other pioneers in the field of Swedish immigration history. I learned the historiography of the field, impressed with the range of methodologies employed and research resources utilized. This knowledge shaped my own work and intellectual formation. Article content and footnotes guided me to new topics for research and directed me toward archival collections to investigate. Regular publication of book reviews and a Swedish-American Bibliography also helped me keep informed about new research, and the editors' introductions to each issue have been consistently insightful, often providing useful perspectives with which to approach the articles to follow.

The *Quarterly* represents a distinctive community of discourse, both serving and creating multiple audiences. Scholarly articles are readable by a general audience, not filled with jargon or impenetrable prose. Even though the

publication has recently become a refereed journal, it is not exclusively so. The journal's acceptance of both scholarly and non-scholarly submissions is a virtue that has expanded readership and afforded lay readers an opportunity to contribute knowledge and experience beyond the ivory tower.

The shift in name from *Swedish Pioneer Historical Quarterly* to *Swedish-American Historical Quarterly* in 1982 is evidence of the Society's desire to keep abreast of changes in scholarship and the broader society, as is the recent shift to refereed journal status. The upcoming changes to the frequency and format of the *Quarterly* and the SAHS Newsletter are further examples of the Society's penchant for innovation.

The *Quarterly* stands out as a meeting place, a transit point of perspectives, peoples, and ideas. Those I have encountered in its pages have fundamentally shaped my outlook and development as a scholar in the field. I count myself fortunate and humbled to have contributed to the making and remaking of this crossroads, a location of interest, quality, and readability—but equally of growth and change.

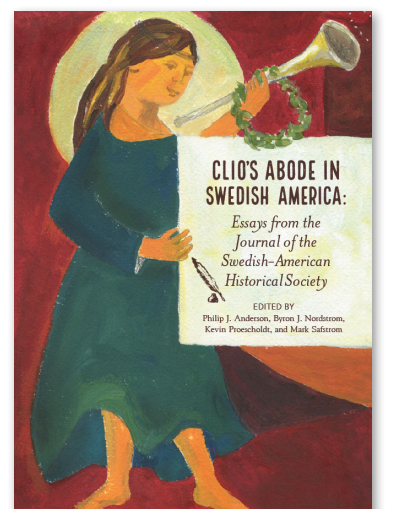
Joy Lintelman, a leading scholar of Swedish America and longtime board member of the Society, recently retired as professor of history at Concordia College (Moorhead), where she taught since 1989. She has written extensively on the experiences of Swedish immigrant women.



## Society to Publish New Book for Its 75th Anniversary

The Swedish-American Historical Society will publish a new book in time for the 75th Anniversary celebration in October. It will consist of twenty-five articles previously published in the *Swedish-American Historical Quarterly* or its predecessor, the *Swedish Pioneer Historical Quarterly*. Intended to help celebrate the Society's anniversary, as well as to commemorate the transition of the *Quarterly* to an annual publication, the new volume will highlight some of the finest articles in the *Quarterly*'s history that also help illuminate the dynamic field of scholarship during that period.

Entitled *Clio's Abode in Swedish America: Essays from the Journal of the Swedish-American Historical Society*, the new volume is edited by current *Quarterly* editor **Mark Safstrom**, former editors **Byron Nordstrom** and **Kevin Proescholdt**, and **Philip Anderson**, president and chair of the publications committee. Mark and the Society's production editor, **Sandy Nelson**, have designed and shepherded the book to publication. They



(continued on page 6)



(New book, continued from page 5)

have undertaken with enviable skill the enormous task of collecting digitized articles over many decades and in widely different formats to produce a final manuscript for the printer, the result of extensive copyediting.

With hundreds of articles over seventy-four years from which to choose, the task of selecting just twenty-five for the new book has been daunting. The editors decided that an author could have only one article in the new book, even though, as in the case of former *Quarterly* editor H. Arnold Barton, some authors have written numerous articles through the years. The editors have also selected ten topical areas into which the twenty-five articles fit: Society History, Immigration History and Trends, Culture, Language and Literature, Local and Regional History, Biography and Family History, Women, Religious History, Interethnic relations, and Identity. The volume concludes with a list of the three-dozen or so books published or supported by the Society since 1950.

This will be the first anthology of *Quarterly* articles since 1979, when H. Arnold Barton edited the volume *Clipper Ship and Covered Wagon: Essays from the Swedish Pioneer Historical Quarterly* (Arno Press). None of the eighteen articles from *Clipper Ship and Covered Wagon* are included in the new volume, a further indication of the rich trove of excellent articles that have appeared in the *Quarterly* over the years.

*Clio's Abode in Swedish America* will serve as the Society's two-year dividend for Society members in the upper membership categories and will also be available for sale through the Society's website.

## Editors of the Quarterly



Publication of the *Swedish-American Historical Quarterly* (previously named the *Swedish Pioneer Historical Quarterly* until 1982) has been the Society's most consistent publication effort in its 75 years of history. It began in 1950, fourteen months after the Society's founding, with an initial issue of just thirty-two pages, and has grown since then becoming the single best source of information and interpretation regarding the great Swedish migration to North America, its cultural presence over time, and the relations between the United States and Sweden.

Editors typically have determined the content of each issue of the *Quarterly*, gathered and edited articles, worked with the associate and book review editor to solicit and place book reviews, compiled news items, and often wrote an introduction to each issue.

Only eight people have served as editors of the *Quarterly* over this almost-75-year history of the journal:

**Paul A. Varg** (1950-1958) was on the history faculty at Ohio State University from 1946 to 1958. He joined the history faculty at Michigan State University in 1958, serving until 1981.

**E. Gustav Johnson** (1958-1967) was professor of English and Swedish at North Park College for twenty-eight years. He wrote numerous articles and reviews for the *Swedish Pioneer Historical Quarterly*, as well as other publications documenting the Swedish immigrant experience.

**Franklin D. Scott** (1967-1974), a preeminent historian of Sweden and Swedish America, served as a professor of history at Northwestern University in Evanston.

**H. Arnold Barton** (1974-1990) was a professor of history at Southern Illinois University in Carbondale. A prolific scholar, he authored many books on Sweden and Swedish America.

**Raymond Jarvi** (1991-1996) taught most of his career at North Park University in Chicago as professor of Swedish. He wrote, edited, and translated several articles and books.

**Byron Nordstrom** (1997-2015) set the record for longevity as editor of the *Quarterly*, serving nineteen years. He taught history at Gustavus Adolphus College in Saint Peter, Minnesota.

**Kevin Proescholdt** (2016-2020) has had a long career in wilderness conservation with environmental organizations and maintains a strong interest in early Swedish settlements in Iowa.

**Mark Safstrom** (2021-present) is the current editor of the *Quarterly*. The author and editor of several books, he serves as associate professor of Scandinavian Studies at Augustana College in Rock Island, Illinois.

## Peter Cassel Day and America Days Celebrated in Kisa, Sweden

Two Society board members helped celebrate Peter Cassel Day on 27-28 July 2023 in Kisa, Sweden, as part of the broader America Days events held there. Peter Cassel emigrated from Kisa in Östergötland in 1845 and established the first permanent Swedish settlement in southeastern Iowa, a community called New Sweden.

**Kevin Proescholdt**, current board member of the Swedish-American Historical Society and former board chair, gave a PowerPoint presentation on 27 July entitled, "Peter Cassel's Influence beyond New Sweden: The Role of the Cassel Family in Swede Point (Madrid), Iowa" in the Kisa Library. Kevin has written extensively about Peter Cassel and New Sweden and is also a descendant of Cassel.

The following day, **Dag Blanck** gave his presentation on "Trans-Atlantic Dreams: Sweden-USA during 150 Years." Dag is also a Society board member, professor at Uppsala University, and director of the Swenson Swedish Immigration Research Center at Augustana College in Rock Island, Illinois. Both presentations were well attended.

Peter Cassel Day has been held in some form or another since the late 1970s. It commemorates the Great Migration from Sweden to America in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and the ties between Sweden and America today. Peter Cassel led the first organized group of common Swedish citizens to America from Kisa,



and his experiences and letters home to Sweden are credited with helping ignite the Great Migration that brought about 1.25 million Swedes to America from 1845 until 1925.

The Emigrant Museum in Kisa has recently been re-furnished under the supervision of museum director Cecilia Sagrén and was open to visitors during the events. She had also developed an excellent exhibit in the Röda Längan building next to the museum on "People, Courage, Dreams."

Included in the America Days events were those organized by the Andrew Peterson Society. Andrew Peterson emigrated from the Ydre area just south of Kisa in 1850, settling near modern-day Waconia, Minnesota. Peterson's diaries served as inspiration to the Swedish novelist Vilhelm Moberg in writing his epic *Emigrants* novels. Jan Hermelin organizes activities for this society, and the group is always looking for new members and support: <http://andrewpeterson.se/>.

The Svenska Peter Cassellsällskapet (Swedish Peter Cassel Society) organized many of the events during America Days in Kisa, under the leadership of board chair Jan Hultman. The Society's website has posted thirty photos from the events, as well as a filmed version of Kevin's presentation, at <https://petercassellsallskapeteng.weebly.com/>. Like the Andrew Peterson Society, the Peter Cassel Society welcomes new members and support from people in both countries.



## Aina Barton Sends Greetings to the Society

Society board member **Kevin Proescholdt**, his wife **Jean Swanson**, and daughter **Carlye Proescholdt**, had a delightful meeting with **Aina Barton** on the first of August in the Stockholm area. Long-time Society member Aina attended Society programs, conferences, and events for decades with her late husband, **H. Arnold Barton**, until their permanent move from Carbondale, Illinois to Sweden in 2010. Arnold passed away in 2016.

At age 98, Aina is still quite lively, funny, and entertaining. Kevin, Jean, and Carlye thoroughly enjoyed their visit with her, laughing much of the time. Aina asked them to bring her greetings to all her friends in America and to the Society on its 75th Anniversary!



## Anita Olson Gustafson Named President of Presbyterian College

Society board member **Anita Olson Gustafson** has become the 20th president of Presbyterian College in Clinton, South Carolina, and began her duties on August 1st. Since 2016, Anita has served as professor of history and dean of the College of Liberal Arts at Mercer University in Macon, Georgia. She is now returning “home” to Presbyterian College, where she taught from 1997-2016 and assumed a variety of administrative roles.

Anita has served several terms on the Society’s board of directors, on and off since 1988 when she was in graduate school at Northwestern University. She has written at length on Jenny Lind, and most recently published *Swedish Chicago: The Shaping of an Immigrant Community, 1880-1920* (Northern Illinois University Press, 2018), which was a Society dividend book and is available for purchase on our website.

Heartly congratulations, Anita, and all best wishes as you assume your new responsibilities!



**NEWSLETTER EDITOR:** Phil Anderson  
**PRODUCTION:** Sandy Nelson

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## Transition of Leadership at the American Swedish Institute

After almost thirty-three years at the helm, **Bruce Karstadt** has retired as president and chief executive officer of the American Swedish Institute in Minneapolis. Bruce began his duties in November 1990 and through the ensuing years has led ASI to become one of the premier museums and cultural organizations in the United States. Since 1994, he has also served as Honorary Consul General of Sweden for Minnesota and has been a key participant in many organizations and professional networks, both in Sweden and the United States.

Among these are his valued colleagues and friends at the Swedish-American museums in Chicago, Philadelphia, and Seattle, as well as the Swedish-American Historical Society. Bruce has served several terms for a total of eighteen years on the Society’s board of directors, beginning in 1992, and is the recipient of its highest honor, the Carl Sandburg Medal (2012).

Bruce’s successor, **Molly Wright Steenson**, began her work at the end of July. A native of St. Paul, she returned to the Twin Cities from Pittsburgh, where she was professor and vice provost for faculty at Carnegie Mellon University. Through the years her vocation has focused on the intersection of design, architecture, ethics, and artificial intelligence.

Congratulations, Bruce, as we look forward to your continued involvement with the Society, and welcome, Molly, as we wish for you and ASI every success in our shared advancement of a common mission in Swedish America!

